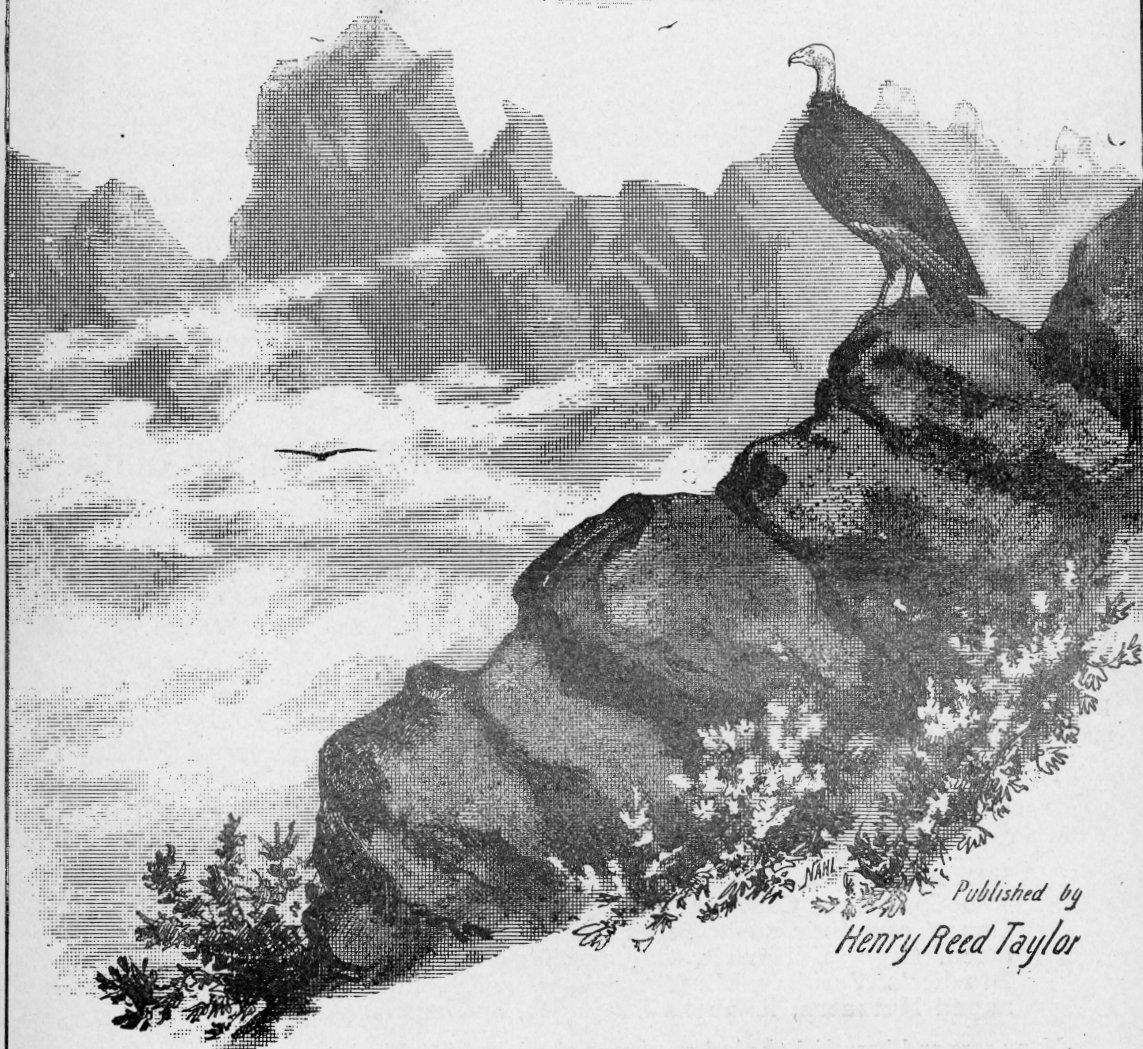


# *The Nidologist.*



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and prevent its falling downward, capsizing the dainty abode and demolishing the four frail little eggs it contained. Next, a longer rope was cast over the limb just out beyond the diminutive dwelling, pulled in with a long stick, run up over a branch above, and let downward along the trunk.

I then descended, took up this end of the rope and began to pull. My companion sawed the limb nearly through at the base. Both pulled on the rope, and the nest was drawn within six feet of the tree. Here we were forced to stop, as our united strength failed to bring it nearer; so, locking the rope—to prevent its flying back—we sat down to devise a plan, for the prize which was “so near, and yet so far,” was yet to be secured.

Of the long rope there was still about fifteen feet dangling down below me. This was just what was wanted. It was drawn up and thrown out by the nest, and the former operation with the stick repeated. The ends were then drawn in by me as I made ready for another pull.

The thick end of the limb was held firm. The long rope, which was thrown over a limb above (and had, to a certain extent, pulled the nest upward) kept it beyond our reach.

All this while Madam *Cerulea* remained fearlessly on her eggs or cluttered about among the green leaves. No amount of hissing or shouting would urge her from her domestic duties. As she sat upon the nest her bill protruded perpendicularly above the rim on one side, while her tail stuck upward on the other. When the rope was thrown over the limb she darted off and disappeared, but soon returning with her mate they flew about uttering their loudest protests against our unexplainable actions. However, the rope soon failed to scare this brave little housewife, and she returned on the nest, where she remained until it was brought within our reach. Then she flew out and rejoined her mate near by.

The eggs, which were four in number, were removed and taken to the ground. Then the limb was sawed off, the equipments cast downward, and the frail nest carried carefully below.

The nest, whose rim is drawn slightly inward, is constructed of lichen, beech buds, vegetable cotton, very fragile grass stems, cocoon cotton, and minute bits of moss. Inwardly it is composed of vegetable cotton, red and white hair from the tail of the horse, a soft, reddish substance, a few fine grasses, with fragments of lichen, and a few beech buds on the bottom.

The four fresh eggs were pale bluish or bluish-white spotted with chestnut and lilac. Three are heavily, and one finely spotted. All

show a tendency toward collecting about the larger end, somewhat resembling a wreath.

ROBERT B. McLAIN.

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## Stray Notes from the Farallons.

A VISIT to the Farallons the past June found none of the accustomed objects of interest missing. Perhaps the most interesting event in Farallon circles this year was the taking of a Raven's nest. A pair of Ravens (presumably *Corvus corax sinuatus*) have nested on a cliff near the West End for years past, occupying a nest built in a niche in a perpendicular cliff. The cliff is one hundred feet or more in height, and the nest was about halfway down and unapproachable except from above.

Previous to this year no one had cared to attempt the descent, but the depredations of the Ravens on the domestic fowl and rabbits became so bold that one of the light keepers, Mr. R. H. Williams, decided to take the risk and destroy the nest if possible. So on June 9 he went down a rope and reached the ledge without accident. The nest was a large structure of sticks and pieces of wreckage from the cove near by. Some of the sticks were so heavy that it must have been a hard task for the birds to have carried them to the ledge. The framework of the nest was carefully and neatly put together, and an abundant lining of goat's hair constituted the nest proper. Two young Ravens were found, utterly unfeathered and with their eyes not yet opened. They could not have been over two days old at most, which would make the nesting date somewhat late.

One of the young Ravens was accidentally dropped from the cliff and killed. The other was taken to the keeper's house in its odorous goat-hair nest, and when I saw it two days later it was a truly hideous object. The head was much larger in proportion than any other part of the body, and the extent of its mouth was something astonishing. When touched on the back the young Raven would utter a miniature “croak” and open its capacious mouth for food. It seemed to do well on small pieces of cooked meat, for when I left the island the pin feathers were beginning to show on the wings. Its head, however, remained as naked as nature made it, and he was accordingly dubbed “Bill Nye.” I am informed that the young Raven has since died. [!] The accompanying illustration shows the bird in its nest, and will give an idea of the capacity of its mouth.

The goat's hair with which the nest was lined was obtained from the body of a dead goat near one of the keeper's houses. Though

the Ravens came often during the time of nest building, no one succeeded in getting a shot at them. On windy days the birds could be seen soaring high above the lighthouse with incomparable ease, now and then giving utterance to one of their harsh croaks.

I shot a Black Turnstone on the rocks near the surf, and saw two others which were very wary. Dissection showed that the bird shot (a male) would probably not have nested this year, at least on the island. A Black-throated Gray Warbler was noted near one of the houses, and the dried-up remains of an Arkansas Kingbird were found near the beach, it having probably

take the following from Goss's *Birds of Kansas*: "Mr. John Swinburn found a nest of the Evening Grosbeak in a thickly wooded canyon, about fifteen miles west of Springville, Apache County, Ariz. The nest was about fifteen feet from the ground, in the top of a small willow bush on the border of a stream. It was a comparatively slight structure, rather flat, and composed of small sticks and roots, lined with fine portions of the latter. This nest contained three fresh eggs, of a clear, greenish ground color blotched with pale brown." I have no reason to doubt Mr. Swinburn's statements, having always heard of him as a careful ob-

perished<sup>1</sup> for lack of proper food. I was told that over thirty Hawks had been shot during the spring, when they came to the island to prey upon the sea birds and rabbits.

Santa Clara, Cal.

C. BARLOW.



A YOUNG RAVEN.